



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND

22 October 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR 2ND LT MICHAEL J. POFFENBARGER

FROM: HQ AFRC/CC  
555 Robins Parkway, Suite 250  
Robins AFB GA 31098-2005

SUBJECT: Request for Immunization Exemption-2nd Lt Michael J. Poffenbarger, 445 OSS

1. I have reviewed your request for religious exemption from the recently approved COMIRNATY®/Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, the EUA COVID-19 vaccines that include Johnson's Janssen and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. I understand your concerns, which are based on your sincerely held beliefs. After carefully considering the specific facts and circumstances of your request, the recommendation of your commander and the MAJCOM Religious Resolution Team, I **disapprove** your request for religious exemption from required immunizations, including the COVID-19 vaccine.
2. I do not doubt the sincerity of your beliefs. However, when evaluating your request for religious exemption, I also had to consider the risk to our mission. All immunizations, including those listed above, are an important element of mission accomplishment, as they contribute to the health, safety, and readiness of the force. Given the importance of our mission, the Department of Defense and the Department of the Air Force have a compelling government interest in maintaining a healthy and ready military force through vaccination. Specifically regarding the COVID-19 vaccination, since less restrictive means of protecting our force from COVID-19 are unavailable, all uniformed Airmen must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Individual medical readiness is a critical requirement for maintaining a healthy and ready force.
3. If you choose to appeal this decision, please submit your written request to your commander within 72 hours of receiving notice of my decision.
4. A copy of this decision memorandum will be placed in your online personnel records. My point of contact is Ch, Lt Col Stacey Hanson, [stacey.hanson@us.af.mil](mailto:stacey.hanson@us.af.mil), DSN 497-1221.

RICHARD W. SCOBEE  
Lieutenant General, USAF  
Commander

cc:  
4 AF/CC  
455 AW/CC  
445 OG/CC  
445 OSS/CC